

## **OSC Objective C1: Implement WIN-Funded “Transition to Work for High Risk Ex-Offenders”**

### **Target Outcomes**

1. At least 90% of participating offenders are placed into full-time unsubsidized employment; with 80% of those placed within 30 days of entering the program, and 100% of those placed within 75 days of entering the program.
2. At least 50% of participating ex-offenders will have sustained\* full-time, unsubsidized employment through one year.
3. Recidivism and return rates\*\* of participating offenders are at least 25% lower than Shelby County average for offenders with comparable risk level.

\*Sustained means that on the last day of each month employment is verified by the employer to the participant’s case manager.

\*\*Return and recidivism rates are defined by committing a new felony or misdemeanor within one year, and within three years, of release from custody or placement on supervision for a previous criminal conviction. “Committed” refers to the date of offense, not the date of conviction.

### **WIN RFP Purpose**

WIN is an active partner with Operation: Safe Community, the crime reduction plan for Memphis and Shelby County. As such, WIN seeks to implement an employment program for people with felony convictions at high risk of re-offending that will have the dual purpose of improving employment outcomes for this population and reducing re-incarceration.

Proposals will be solicited from providers demonstrating a documented track record of stable employment and recidivism-reduction for clients with felony convictions at high risk of re-offending. Competitive proposals will be those offering a suite of services that includes, but is not limited to, all of the following components.

### **Definitions of Required Services**

- **Work Readiness and Life Skills Education:** Includes but is not limited to the following topics: appropriate workplace behavior, problem solving skills, resume writing, job-searching, personal presentation, basics of communication, how to discuss conviction and criminal history on an interview, finding stable housing, nutrition and exercise, personal finances and securing transportation.
- **Mental Health Treatment:** The provision of an array of evidence-based interventions as needed, including a range of cognitive and other therapies, family therapy, and medication assisted treatment, prioritizing individuals with serious mental illness (defined as a major thought or mood disorder that produces substantial distress, impairs normal functioning, and requires continuing treatment) and / or co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders. The program should be multidisciplinary in approach and agrees to work collaboratively with all other providers and community supervisors involved in the client’s reentry into the community.
- **Short Term Paid Transitional, Subsidized Jobs:** Transitional Jobs (TJ) programs can come in a variety of forms, including programs focused on a single occupation or sector, cohort-based

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programs that place teams of individuals in project-based environments, programs that develop transitional jobs for each participant in an ad-hoc manner, and in-house placement programs. Transitional jobs must be limited to no more than 75 days, and require at least fifteen (15) but not more than forty (40) hours of work per week. WIN will subsidize transitional jobs at minimum wage (\$7.25/hour as of release of this RFP) but encourages respondents to develop TJ placements that pay self-sustaining wages. The ability of the respondents to leverage external funding to offset the wages of participants will be included in the proposal's evaluation, as will the demonstrated commitment of respondents to make every effort to limit the use of transitional, subsidized jobs only as necessary to facilitate transition to unsubsidized full-time job placement.

- **Full-Time Job Placement:** Link people to traditional unsubsidized employment of 35 to 40+ hours a week. Offering assistance with making the necessary contacts and completing the required documentation of application for employment. Provide job development services to include developing and maintaining a listing of employment opportunities within the region as well as organizations that have experience with hiring people with criminal histories. Conduct regular meetings with potential employers to inform of available resources, funding, and training, etc. available to employers of people with criminal histories.
- **Post-Placement Services:** Provide job coaching services in a variety of forms, including acting as an intermediary for the employers to discuss any concerns about employees, making every attempt to address the employers' concerns and engaging the employee to encourage job retention (i.e. case management, support services, and incentives, etc.). Assist with reemployment in the event of job loss and with advancement opportunities.

### **Target Population**

Services will be provided to offenders incarcerated with and released by Shelby County Department of Corrections who are at a moderate to high risk to recidivate as determined by the *Strong R tool*.

### **Funding Amount**

The Grant Award will be \$1.5 million for a single contract. Funding must be used to supplement, rather than supplant, funding for existing programs/projects. Supplanting is defined as replacing those funds identified and appropriated for the same purpose prior to the grant award. Grant funds may be used to expand an existing effort or to create a new project. Project expansion includes, but is not limited to, adding services to a program that is currently offered to offenders and extending existing services for offenders to a larger target population or new geographic area.

### **Grant Period**

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Successful proposals will be funded for a project period that will commence July 1 and extend over a 2 year performance period.

### **Independent Evaluator and Program Evaluation**

Grantees must agree to be evaluated by University of Memphis Public Safety Institute, and to participate in a continuous improvement process utilizing evaluator data. The evaluation will include but not be limited to an objective process to determine:

- Whether performance outcomes have been achieved
- Impact of the program on the outcomes
- Government cost savings associated with outcomes achieved